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## Notes and Opinions.

How slowly old errors die is curiously illustrated in the article of the Century Dictionary on the word Bible. Explaining its derivation (through the Latin *biblia*), from the Greek *biblos*, also written *byblos*, it gives as one definition of the latter, "The Egyptian papyrus, of the inner bark of which paper was made." All of which is quite true except the last clause; and this is quite incorrect, inasmuch as the papyrus is an endogenous plant, and has no bark either inner or outer. Did the Century dictionary writer possibly rely on Liddell and Scott, who define *biblos* as "the inner bark of the papyrus," and then "a book, of which the leaves were made of this bark"? If so, he might have learned to distrust the authority of L. and S. in this particular matter if he had turned to *byblos*, which he would have found defined as the fibrous coats of the papyrus. . . . "especially the *outer* coat of papyrus used for writing on." Under *papyrus*, although it is defined as a rush, it is stated that writing paper was made of it "by peeling off its outer coat and gluing the slips together transversely." This venerable error (self-contradicting, but not self-correcting), the late Dr. Ezra Abbot was at pains to correct in a most interesting article in the Library Journal of Nov., 1878, in which he shows the general prevalence of the error even among scholars, and sets the matter right in his usual thoroughgoing fashion. The Century Dictionary also itself states the matter correctly under the head of papyrus. "The papyrus was prepared by cutting the central pith of the reed into longitudinal strips which were laid side by side, with another layer of strips crossing them at right angles. The two layers, thus prepared, were soaked in water, then pressed together to make them adhere, and dried."

E. D. B.

**The Preface to the First Epistle of John.**—In the *Expositor* for February, Professor Findlay expounds the first four verses of the first Epistle of John. This is a homiletical epistle, the address of an absent pastor to his flock, or to disciples widely scattered. It is a specimen of apostolic preaching to believers, a masterpiece in the art of edification. The address is based on the gospel history. The preface is indeed a summary of the Gospel according to John (cf. 1 John i. 1-18; xx. 30, 31). Its subject is *the eternal life manifested*. St. John had witnessed the supreme manifestation of God. The secret of the universe had been revealed to him in this which *was from the beginning*. The source of spiritual life to men is that which was in the first instance the source of natural life to all creatures. Here lies the foundation of John's

theology. It assumes the unity of the seen and the unseen. It interdicts and excludes all gnostical, dualistic and docetic conceptions of the world. This life that came from the Father and was manifested to the eyes of the witnesses of Jesus, was the one life and love that runs through all things, the source and root of being.

The apostle emphatically asserts the actuality of the manifestation of this life. Twice in three verses he reiterates, "we have seen it," twice "we have heard," and twice he repeats, "the life was manifested." The apostles were well aware of the importance of historical truth. Their faith was calm, rational, sagacious. Criticism and an alien philosophy were not idle in those days. The Gnostics of the later apostolic age were already, in their peculiar method and dialect, treating the incarnation, the miracles, the resurrection and the ascension, as a myth, a beautiful poetic dream, a pictorial representation of religious truth. In this epistle John confronts the Gnostic error with his impressive and authoritative declaration. From the eternal life revealed in Christ and thus attested, there is derived a *new divine fellowship for man*. "Our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ." Three words resume the teaching of the first paragraph of this epistle: *life, manifestation, fellowship*.

T. H. R.

**The Kingdom of God.**—Erich Haupt, D.D., Professor of Theology at Halle, contributes a short but very full and valuable article on this subject for the March *Expository Times*. In the Synoptic Gospels (he writes) the Kingdom of God is the main theme of the preaching of Jesus. Nowhere, however, does Jesus give an express explanation of this term, but leaves his hearers to gather his meaning from the totality of his words and from the various occasions on which he uses them. The foundation of the idea is contained in the Old Testament and is developed in later Judaism. Jesus attaches himself to this preceding development, but in such a way as to give to the term an entirely new meaning. The term itself is not found in the Old Testament, but is first used in the Apocalyptic writings of Judaism about the time of Jesus. The Kingdom of God is the condition in which God's sovereign will, both as regards Israel and the Gentiles, is to be fully recognized and carried out. This will was a *saving* as well as a *sovereign* will. So the term came to designate the salvation, the sum of the blessings which God's sovereignty was to bring. God's sovereignty and the salvation of Israel, especially of the pious in Israel, became so synonymous that the first term became interchangeable with the latter.

To Jesus, as to the Jews, the Kingdom of God consists in this, that God *give salvation*. The Kingdom of God is not a place. It is not an organization of individuals. It is that which God gives to man in salvation. Sometimes instead of the term "Kingdom of God," we find the phrase "Eternal Life" (cf Mat. xviii. 8, 9), and in John the latter has taken the place of the former. With this exception Paul agrees for whom the Kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Christ uses the term "King-

dom of Heaven" as well as the term "Kingdom of God." By the word heaven he seeks to describe not the *place* but the *kind* of this kingdom, its nature and its character. "My kingdom is not of this world," is an explanatory paraphrase for the expression "Kingdom of Heaven." It is the condition in which, within this earthly world, the world of eternity has attained reality. Christ brought this kingdom into this world for in him the eternal life was actually existent. *It* is here, for *he* is here. "Summing up, we may say that to Christ the term Kingdom of God is the comprehensive expression for the New Testament blessing of salvation in its fullest sense."

**The Higher Criticism.**—Several noteworthy articles have recently appeared on Biblical Criticism. Orello Cone of Buchtel College has an exceedingly thoughtful study in the *New World* for September on New Testament Criticism and Religious Belief. The writer shows the relation between the two. Religious belief affects criticism and is affected by it. Criticism will give to religious belief its true basis. There is no conflict between faith and reason, rather between theology and science, between preconceived doctrinal opinions and opening new truth. A true reconciliation is certain, for man's nature is religious, and truth exists. Criticism of the New Testament prepares the way for a true belief. Such is the spirit of this article. The writer admits that there must be preconceived conceptions of the Bible on the part of any one who approaches it, but asserts that this must not affect the integrity of the critical process. The position that the New Testament writings are in their entirety, in form as well as in content, of supernatural origin, forestalls all criticism. There can be no true criticism with iron-clad prepossessions, whether they be of the dogmatic, ultra-conservative, theologic character, or whether they be of the equally dogmatic, rationalistic, philosophic nature. The writer discusses the task of criticism, its problems of the text and the writings themselves, and considers at length the theory under which criticism must do its work, viz.: that the New Testament writings, though if containing a divine revelation, yet as literature, are of human origin. Criticism of the New Testament writings proceeds on the assumption that they constitute a literature. The writer does not make the distinctions of "lower" and "higher" criticism.

In the *Reformed Quarterly Review* for October, Rev. A. A. Pfanstiehl writes on Modern Biblical Criticism. Acknowledging the necessity and value of criticism, whatever the school of theology to which one belongs, he yet deprecates certain dangers and tendencies of criticism. It deals with the Bible as literature and not as revelation, and so the truth considered and handled as literature, treated critically, scrutinized as text and writing, loses the freshness and life-giving power inherent in it. We hardly agree with the writer when he accuses the higher criticism of upsetting Biblical Theology and of destroying the inspiration of the Scriptures. This may be true of a certain type of investigation that goes under the name of higher criticism,

but higher criticism itself, truly conceived, is the handmaid of Biblical Theology, and is absolutely the only process by which we can arrive at a true theory of inspiration.

This brings us to the article by Dr. Osgood, of Rochester Theological Seminary, in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* for October, 1892, on the History and Definition of Higher Criticism. This is an interesting and forceful article, in which the writer denies the propriety of the two divisions of literary criticism. He claims that criticism is one process, that the so-called lower and higher criticism overlap, that the problems of each are necessarily related, that no problems of the lower can be solved without the aid of the higher, and that moreover the appellation of one as lower and the other as higher is unjust and untrue. The consideration of the text requires just as much penetration and learning as the consideration of the authenticity and genuineness. He asserts that the distinction is not common among literary critics, and is one not made by Schleiermacher, Kuenen, Weiss and many other of the leading scholars of this and preceding generations. The writer gives a characterization of the life and work of Eichhorn who was the first to claim general recognition for this distinction. In denying the validity of this distinction he asserts that Eichhorn gave no definition of higher criticism, and no rules or principles on which to base its results. Though there may be much force in what the writer says, yet there do exist these two phases of criticism represented by such men as Westcott and Hort, Tischendorf and Ezra Abbott on the one hand, and by Weiss and Wellhausen on the other. Each has its problems and its aims distinct from that of the other. Each presents a sort of work very different from the other, and one that requires a different type of mind. The one investigates the problems of the text, the other that of the authenticity, genuineness, date, etc., of the writing itself. Though the lower may require as great penetration and learning, yet the higher has the broader outlook and the wider range, touching the history and philosophy of the age.

The last paper to which we will call attention is one by President Harper recently published in the *Chautauqua Assembly Herald* on "The Higher Criticism." Since it meets many of the queries raised by the preceding articles we will give this more in detail. President Harper does not question the validity of the term "higher" criticism. He takes it as one established, in use now for a century, and considers its purpose, its principles, its method and spirit, and its results. Criticism, he asserts, in its technical success, is in a single word, "inquiry." The whole business of a critic is to make inquiry. The literary critic inquires as to the authorship, the authenticity, the style and the character of a particular writing. The historical critic makes inquiry as to the date and details of an historical event, and its relation to other events which occurred before and after. History and literature have always been and are inseparable. The term, "higher criticism," describes the process of inquiring which includes both the literary and the historical, the term lower criticism being applicable to inquiry that relates only to the text. "The pur-

pose of the 'higher criticism' is to discover the date of the book, its authorship, the particular circumstances under which it had its origin, the various characteristics of style which it presents; the occasion of the book; the purpose which in the mind of its author it was intended to subserve. Any and every man who asks these questions concerning any book is a higher critic. Every real student of the Sacred Word is a higher critic. If he is not a higher critic he is not a student." The materials of higher criticism are (1) the book itself, its diction, its style, its historical allusions, its religious ideas and (2) outside sources. The principles of the higher criticism require that allowance be made for the literary methods in vogue in the age in which the author wrote, for the fact that he wrote first of all for the people of his own times, and that his purpose was to bring to men that which must otherwise have been unknown, the knowledge of God and of His will concerning men. That the work of the higher criticism is a reasonable work, who can doubt? It is the very work which the student does in every other line of thought. It is necessary. The questions asked by higher criticism must be answered by the friends as well as by the enemies of Biblical religion. The indifferent must be aroused. Tradition obscures the truth, and the sacredness of truth makes the work absolutely imperative.

It is necessary to distinguish carefully between the true criticism and the false, a rational criticism and a rationalistic. The difference between the two lies not so much in a difference of purpose, materials or principles, but rather in the method of work and in the spirit in which the work is conducted. There are two classes of rationalistic critics: the class that gives undue prominence to the authority of reason and denies the authority of the Scriptures and the supernatural origin of Christianity; and that other class, truly rationalistic, though not often so-called, that magnify the authority of Scripture, but in their work, though perhaps unconscious of the fact, place reason still higher. The first class argue, there being no supernatural revelation, this material had its origin thus and thus. The second class argue, there being a supernatural revelation, this material had its origin thus and thus. There is another school of critics hardly yet organized, still largely ideal, which for convenience may be called the rational school. The rational criticism will be scientific in spirit, observing all the facts and formulating conclusions to be perfected only after reflection and verification. It will be broad and open, as against narrow and dogmatic. It requires the work of the specialist, but also recognizes that the very ability to specialize carries with it inability to generalize. The spirit of the rational criticism is never bold, yet never shrinking back, always cautious, yet ever alert. The charge of narrowness and dogmatism may be made against both classes of rationalistic critics. The rational criticism must be constructive not destructive. It will be characterized by the spirit of the greatest of all reformers. "I came not to destroy but to fulfill." He did a destructive work but his spirit was the constructive. The rational criticism is reverent not blasphemous. Here and here perhaps most widely the

rational parts company with the rationalistic criticism. World-wide is the difference between the reverent and irreverent spirit. The higher criticism will recognize both the natural and the supernatural elements. The result will be : (1) the man who has believed, without knowing why, will have an intelligent basis for his faith ; (2) the men who have not been able to believe, intelligent, broad - minded men, with the removal of misconception will have no room for scepticism ; (3) " The large class whose attitude has always been that of cold indifference will learn that this book is what it purports to be, the Word of God, and that being such it is worthy of all the respect and attention its strongest adherents claim for it. It will become to them a thing of life, not because it has changed—it has always been alive—but because they have changed toward it. Their interest will be aroused. The beauty and sweetness, the power and majesty will now appeal to them. A something has been found which serves as a connecting link between it and them. They have been brought into touch with it. Only this ; but this is everything. And the world will, at last, give to the Sacred Word in reality the place which its friends now flatter themselves it occupies, the place of supremacy. The Bible is not supreme to-day. That it will be one day not one of us will doubt ; but that day is far distant unless soon a rational interpretation and a rational presentation of Biblical material prevails more widely."

T. H. R.